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ABSTRACT

This report presents a text analysis of "The Wonderful Desert," a brief selection from the "Reader's Digest Skill Builder" series. (The techniques used in arriving at the analysis are presented in a Reading Center Technical Report, Number 168, "Problems and Techniques of Text Analysis.") Tables are given for a statistical lexical analysis and for a syntactic analysis. Analyses of text level properties include an analysis of text structure, paragraph analysis and expository description, and an analysis of discourse properties, rhetorical devices and text-connective inferences. An analysis of the layout includes reviews of illustrations and graphics, the text layout, and sentences containing line breaks. (MKM)

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CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF READING

Technical Report No. 170

ANALYSIS OF "THE WONDERFUL DESERT"

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Text from "The Wonderful Desert," Reader's Digest Skill Builder (Part Two), prepared by L. Moore and L. B. Mastrotto. Copyright © 1959 by Reader's Digest Services, Inc., Educational Division, and adapted from "The Challenge of the Desert," by Edwin Muller, Reader's Digest, June 1957. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

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Analysis of "The Wonderful Desert"

I. Introduction

"The Wonderful Desert" is a brief (ten paragraphs) selection from the Reader's Digest Skill Builder series, adapted from an article by Edwin Muller. It is expository prose, at approximately the second grade level. There are a few small, decorative illustrations accompanying the text.

The techniques used in arriving at the analysis presented here are described in Reading Center Technical Report 168, "Problems and Techniques of Text Analysis." See also Technical Report 169, "Analysis of Babar Loses his Crown."

II. Statistical Lexical Analysis

This text contains 388 word tokens, counting contractions as containing two tokens. The text contains 160 word types (different words).

The following tables are a listing of the types and their frequency in DESERT. The first figure given is the percentage frequency of occurrence of the individual word in the text. For example, a word that appears once in the text has a frequency of .25%. The second figure is the number of items per frequency occurrence. For example, there are 89 types that occur only once in the text. The final figure is the percentage of the types that the words of each frequency constitute. Thus, the 89 words with one occurrence each are 55.6% of the 160 types.

A. 1 Occurrence--text frequency .25%; number of items 89; 55.6% of the types.

100	14	about	across	another
apart	back	become	better	body
but	car	comes	covered	deep
die	digging	down	drop	eat
fast	feed	flat	food	friendly
get	go	green	heavy	help
hilly	hours	hungry	into	last
learned	leaves	lies	life	little
lost	lucky	many	miles	most
move	must	new	nine	no
often	on	or	other	out
pipes	race	rain (v)	rivers	safe
sandy	see	seem	seven	small
sometimes	spot	springs	stay	storm
story	surprised	things	through	today
too	travel	until	up	wait
ways	week	what	where	which
without	wonderful	would	yet	

B. 2 Occurrences--text frequency .51%; number of items 30; 18.75% of the types.

also	at	bring	by	can
do	enough	every	far	five
flowers	ground	hole	how	if
of	once	one	perhaps	roots
sand	save	send	stems	stores
that (comp)	there	this	with	years

C. 3 Occurrences--text frequency .77%; number of items 19; 11.8% of the types.

all	camel	day	falls
from	grass	grow	hard
knows	live	may	not
seed	think	try	very

D. 4 Occurrences--text frequency 1.03%; number of items 4; 2.5% of the types.

animals	man	people	some

E. 5 Occurrences--text frequency 1.28%; number of items 3; 1.87% of the types.

find	then	you

F. 6 Occurrences--text frequency 1.54%; number of items 3; 1.87% of the types.

it	plants	rain (n)

G. 7 Occurrences--text frequency 1.80%; number of items 3; 1.87% of the types.

and	have	will

H. 12 Occurrences--text frequency 3.09%; number of items 2; 1.25% of the types.

a	in

I. 13 Occurrences--text frequency 3.35%; number of items 2; 1.25% of the types.

be	they (all forms)

J. 15 Occurrences--text frequency 3.68%; number of items 2; 1.25% of the types.

desert	water

K. 16 Occurrences--text frequency 4.12%; number of items 2; 1.25% of the types.

the	to

III. Syntactic Analysis

A. Parsing into Major Constituents (Relationally Defined)

Legend

Constituent names: NPsub = subject, V = verb, NPob = object, PN = predicate nominative, A = adverbial, Adj = adjective, Det = determiner, Prep = preposition, Aux = auxiliary verb.

( ) indicates number of verb-containing clauses or clause remnants.

\+ indicates position of line break; if it follows a constituent name without a space, the break occurs internally to that constituent.

< > indicates post-modifying clause.

[ ] indicates internal structure of preceding major constituent.

*X...*X indicates that X is a discontinuous constituent.

-V indicates negated verb.

X after a sentence number indicates that the structure deviates from the canonical subject-initial structure; i.e., no other order is possible without grossly changing meaning.

XX after a sentence number indicates that the canonical deviation is unmarked.

CC precedes commentary on deviant constituent order, position of line break, and/or discontinuous constituents.

1XX PN VN NPsub (1)

CC: Sentence is a question.

2 NPsub *V A *V NPob+ (1)

CC: think...of; Det + N Prep N.

3 NPsub V NPob[NPsub+ -V NPob <NPsub V+>] (3)

CC: Det : N; to + V.

4XX A1 there VN NPsub A2 (1)

CC: A1 is a logical connective, yet; there-insertion is obligatory here.

5 NPsub+ V A (1)

CC: N, + N and N

6XX A *VN NPsub *V (1)

CC: can...be; sentence is a question; A is now.

7 It V PN (1)

8X A1 NPsub -V A2 (1)

CC: A1 is a locative.

9X A1 A2 NPsub V (1)

CC: A1 is a temporal connective, then; A2 is a measure phrase.

10 NPsub V (1)

11X A1 Npsub V A2 (1)

CC: A1 is a temporal.

12 NPsub V NPob (1)

13 Npsub V + A (1)

14X A1 NPsub V A2 + and A3 (1)

CC: A1 is a measure phrase.

15X A1 NPsub V A2, + A3 V A4 (2)

CC: A1 is a temporal connective.

16 NPsub V A <V NPob> (2)

17 NPsub V NPob A+ (1)

CC: A A Prep Det + N

18 NPsub V NPob A+ (1)

CC: A A Prep + NP

19 NPsub V NPob A+ (1)

CC: Prep Det + N or N

20 NPsub A V NPob (1)

21 NPsub V NPob A (1)

22 NPsub V NPob+ V A (2)

CC: Det + N

23 NPsub A1 + V NPob[A2 V NPob] (2)

CC: A2 is interrogative conjunction how.

24 NPsub <V A+> V NPob[NPsub V NPob] (3)

CC: Prep Det + N

25 NPsub V+ NPob (1)

CC: aux + V

26 NPsub A1 V NPob[V A2+] (2)

CC: Prep A3 Det + N

27XX NPsub V V NPob[A + NPsub V] (3)

CC: A is an interrogative conjunction, where.

28 NPsub V A (1)

29 If NPsub V Adj, NPsub V and NPsub V NPob (3)

30 NPsub V + until NPsub V NPob (2)

31X A1 NPsub + V A2 (1)

CC: A1 is a temporal connection.

32XX *V NPsub *V NPsub[that NPsub V Adj and Adj] (2)

CC: do...think

33X A NPsub V (1)

CC: A is a logical connective.

34X A + NPsub V Adj and Adj (1)

CC: A is a locative.

35X A1 NPsub A2 V A3 + A4 (1)

CC: A1 is a temporal.

36 But NPsub -V Adj (1)

37 NPsub + V A1 A2 (1)

38 NPsub V + A if NPsub V NPob (2)

39 NPsub V PN <A V> (2)

40 NPsub V NPob (1)

41 NPsub V V NPob A (2)

42 NPsub V V NPob A1[by V A2 + A3] (3)

43X A1 NPsub V + NPob A2 (1)

CC: A1 is a directional.

44X A1 A2 NPsub <V NPob> V (2)

CC: A1 is sentence adverb perhaps; A2 is a temporal.

45X A1 NPsub <V NPob+> V A2 (2)

CC: Det + N; A1 is a logico-temporal connective.

46 NPsub V PN+ (1)

CC: Det + Adj N

B. Transformations

1 WhQ-movement, S-V Inversion

3 Do-support

5 Conjunction reduction (subject NP)

6 WhQ-movement, S-V Inversion

8 Adv-preposing

9 Adv-preposing

11 Adv-preposing, ?Passive?

Not clear whether this is passive or adjectival participle.

14 Adv-preposing, conjunction-reduction (PrepP)

15 Adv-preposing, Equi (in the infinite clause)

16 Equi, Niching

19 ?Conjunction reduction? (to the final NP)

20 Niching

22 Equi (Subject of infinitive), for-deletion

23 Niching (also), WhQ-movement, Equi (subject of infinitive)

24 Wh+be-deletion (Subject NP), ?that-deletion?

26 Niching (too), Equi (Subject of infinitive)

27 A-raising (seem), WhQ-movement

29 Adv-preposing

31 Adv-preposing

32 YNQ-formation, Do-support

33 Adv-preposing, ?Passive?

Not clear whether this is Passive or participial adjective.

34 Adv-preposing

35 Adv-preposing, Niching (often)

37 Niching (sometimes)

39 Tough-movement, Relative-infinitive formation,

Equi, Wh-movement (with Pied-piping)

40 ?Conjunction reduction? (Subject NP)

41 Equi (Subject of infinitive)

42 Equi (Subject of infinitive), Equi (Subject of gerund)

43 Adv-preposing

44 Adv-preposing (two applications), ?Conjunction reduction?

45 Adv-preposing, Relative infinitive formation, Equi (Subject of infinitive), for-deletion, ?ones-deletion?

C. Oral-Written Differences

1. General Comments

Except for the use of rhetorical questions, the language in this piece is clearly of an academic written style that borders occasionally on the pedantic.

2. Comments by Sentence

1 The absence of contraction here is a mark of written style. The rhetorical question, apparently intended to lead the reader to consider what deserts are like, is unusual in written style, at least with this kind of purpose. It has a condescending, patronizing effect for an adult reader. We do not know whether it will have the same effect on children.

2 For some Americans, at once is a written form, with right away or some other expression used in speaking.

3 Lack of tense agreement in the embedded clause is odd, though not a mark of any particular style.

4 Initial yet is a mark of written style; most people would probably use but in speaking.

6 Rhetorical question; see 1.

7 No contraction.

12 The use of impersonal you here has an oral flavor. Many is likely to be replaced by lots of in oral style.

15 Perhaps is likely to be replaced by maybe in oral style.

21 Singular generic is a bit odd here; camels would be more natural.

23 See 21.

26 Man is a mark of academic, probably written style. Niches too is written style.

33 No contraction.

35 Today might be replaced by nowadays or now in oral style.

39 In which to live is a spasm of purism. Nobody would ever say it in spontaneous oral English, using to live or to live in instead.

40 Use of must of necessity here is a mark of written style. It would likely be have to in oral.

41 Men has a written flavor, and would probably be replaced by people in spontaneous speech. Note that this has nothing whatsoever to do with sexism.

42 No contraction.

43 Preposed from phrase gives a slightly written flavor.

44 Perhaps is written; would be replaced by maybe in speaking.

45 The hungry is journalese.

IV. Analysis of Text-Level Properties

A. Text Structure

1. Paragraph Analysis

a. Sentence-by-Sentence Text-Structural Analysis

This is an analysis of the text-structure of the paragraphs individually. It is not clear how the paragraphs relate to one another, except that III, IV, and V are parallel elaborations on the same theme. Additional commentary on the overall structure of this text is to be found in Section 2.

Legend

Roman numerals refer to paragraph numbers.

Arabic numerals preceded by Roman numerals or by # refer to sentence numbers.

Sentences are numbered consecutively for the text as a whole.

DFCN precedes description of the discourse function of the sentence.

DINF precedes indication of inferences that must be made in inferring the discourse function of the sentence.

SDEV precedes indication of syntactic devices which reflect or contribute to the discourse function.

PTID precedes an identification of the point of each paragraph.

Principles for Classification of Consequence Types

Temporal Consequence: A is a TC of B if A follows B in time.

Logical Consequence: A is a LC of B if A is the inevitable result of B.

Pragmatic Consequence: A is a PC of B if B is a necessary but not sufficient condition for A.

Paragraph 1

PTID Topic paragraph: There is life even in the desert.

#1

DFCN Announces topic

DINF by syntactically marked implication.

SDEV Sentence in a question.

#2

DFCN Relates topic to reader and to presumed assumptions about topic.

#3

DFCN Further presumed assumptions about topic.

#4

DFCN Denies assumptions of 1:3.

DINF Requires inference: 1:3 says things do not grow; 1:4 says there is life.

SDEV Connective yet announces that a contradiction is coming.

#5

DFCN Elaborates on 1:4.

#6

DFCN Indicates the contradiction of 1:4 and 1:3

DINF by syntactically marked implication.

SDEV Sentence is a rhetorical question.

#7

DFCN Indicates that the article will discuss this contradiction

DINF by implication: sentence merely refers to a story.

SDEV Reference, if any, of it is not clear.

Paragraph 11

PTID What happens when it rains.

#8

DFCN Background for sequence of events.

#9

DFCN Initial event

SDEV Introduced by temporal connective then.

#10

DFCN Description of event in 11:9.

#11

DFCN Temporal consequence of 11:10.

DINF Many steps required in the inference chain connecting 11:10 and 11:11 are unstated.

SDEV Syntactic form implies reference to a state, but the connective, all at once, indicates that 11:11 refers to an event.

#12

DFCN Another temporal consequence of 11:10.

DINF Same inferences at 11:11, plus one relating facts to reader or "PRO."

SDEV No syntactic clues.

#13

DFCN Description of item in rhematic position in 11:12.

#14

DFCN Elaboration further specifying 11:13.

DINF Understanding requires lots of encyclopedic knowledge.

#15

DFCN Indicates that this is a cyclic sequence

DINF by syntactically marked indication.

SDEV Cyclicity indicated by the word another contained in a clause introduced by perhaps.

Paragraph III

PTID How plants cope with lack of water.

#16

DFCN General claim.

#17

DFCN Instantiation

SDEV function marked by the quantifier some.

#19

DFCN General claim; logically parallel with III:16.

SDEV The quantifier other relates III:19 to III:17 and III:18 syntactically.

Paragraph IV

PTID How animals cope with lack of water.

#20

DFCN General claim.

SDEV The connective also and the repetition of the verb in III:19 (save) relate this sentence to III:19.

#21

DFCN Instantiation of IV:20.

#22

DFCN Elaboration of IV:21.

#23

DFCN General claim; logically parallel with IV:20.

SDEV Same subject (and topic?) as IV:21. The connective also relates this sentence to IV:21 and IV:22.

#24

DFCN Relates IV:23 to man.

#25

DFCN Explanation (justification for claim made therein) of IV:24, presages Paragraph V.

Paragraph V

PTID How man copes with lack of water.

#26

DFCN Topic sentence: General claim.

SDEV Too relates V to I and IV.

#27

DFCN Instantiation of V:26.

#28

DFCN Elaboration of V:27.

DINF This is apparently the then-clause of a hypothetical sentence whose if- or when- clause has been suppressed. In this context, V:28 is a temporal consequence.

SDEV Suppressed clause: When they sense that rain will fall at a certain spot.

#29

DFCN Temporal consequence of V:28.

#30

DFCN Pragmatic consequence of V:29.

#31

DFCN Pragmatic and temporal consequence of V:30.

DINF Full comprehension requires inference of why V:31 follows from the states inferable from the event described (in a subordinate clause) in V:30.

SDEV Connective is temporal then.

Paragraph VI

PTID What deserts look like.

#32

DFCN Announces topic

DINF by syntactically marked implication.

SDEV Sentence is a loaded 2nd-person yes-no question, relating the topic (whether deserts are sandy and flat) to the reader.

#33

DFCN Indicates that inference invited in V:32 is incorrect

DINF by lexico-syntactically marked implication.

SDEV Sentence explicitly claims that hearer will be surprised. Connective is logical then.

DFCN Sentence is a logical consequence of an affirmative answer to VI:32.

#34

DFCN General claim; contradicts inference invited in VI:32.

Paragraph VII

PTID The dangers of desert travel.

#35

DFCN General claim.

#36

DFCN Denies a syntactically marked inference invited by VII:35.

DINF In the context of VII:36, VII:35 implies that desert travel is safe.

SDEV Connective is but, which marks the subsequent clause as contrary to expectation.

#37

DFCN Explanation of VII:36; justification for the claim made therein.

#38

DFCN Pragmatic consequence of VII:37.

DINF Many steps are unstated in the inference chain connecting VII:38 to VII:37.

Paragraph VIII

PTID The need for water in the desert. [What is this paragraph doing here!?!? Its (few!) claims have been assumed in every preceding paragraph!]

#39

DFCN General claim.

#40

DFCN Instantiation of VIII:39.

DINF Many steps must be reconstructed before this can be clearly seen as an instantiation of VIII:40.

Paragraph IX

PTID Attempts to bring water to the desert.

#41

DFCN Topic sentence: General claim.

#42

DFCN Instantiation of IX:41.

#43

DFCN Instantiation of IX:41.

Paragraph X

PTID Prospects for the future.

#44

DFCN General claim.

#45

DFCN Temporal and pragmatic consequence of X:44.

DINF Requires inferences to be seen as a consequence.

#46

DFCN Logical consequence of X:45.

DINF Requires inferences to be seen as a consequence.

b. Commentary

This text is strikingly disconnected, bordering on incoherence. Yet each paragraph has a more or less discernible structure. Why is it such a disconnected-sounding text? Some possible answers:

(1) Because it is not at all evident how the paragraphs relate to each other, or to any general thesis (the desert is wonderful?). There are no connectives, with the exception of sentences 19 and 20, which relate the first sentence of a paragraph to any previous paragraph. The exception actually only relates a topic sentence to something in the last sentence of the previous paragraph.

(2) Because the internal structure of some sentences is not well-suited to their role or function in the text structure. An example which suggests this explanation is the repeated generic a camel in IV:23 following a definite pronoun used for generic a camel in IV:21. By IV:25, where there is a pronoun again, the reference is only minimally (or with difficulty) interpreted as generic. (IV:24 refers to the same class of objects? by the phrase his camel, relating it/them to (generic?) a man).

(3) Because the relation of the paragraphs to one another (cf. Sec. 1) is in fact minimal or lacking. Paragraph VIII, for example, is entirely out of place, its content being implicit in every previous paragraph, especially II through V. Paragraph VI, on the other hand, bears no relations to any other paragraph.

In general, the disconnectedness seems to be reflected in the large number of inferences required to connect individual sentences with each other, to say nothing of paragraphs, and in the comments on the total absence, in some places, not only of explicit connections, but of syntactic or lexical clues with which intended conceptual relations could be inferred. It is predicted that the comprehension of a text with such properties would be comparatively poor.

2. Expository Description

Several factors preclude an easy analysis of exposition. There are probably multiple types of structures which are used to organize and represent exposition, and the structures appear to be more related to the specific content of the text than they are in narrative material. However, very few studies have attempted to describe the interaction between text and cognitive structures, especially with regard to children. Until we have data, either confirming or invalidating the notion of specific general structures underlying the comprehension of these materials, our knowledge remains inconclusive.

However, it appears to be possible to analyze texts such as DESERT by constructing an underlying cohesive cognitive structure. It is different from a story structure in both the types of information and organization. A preliminary description is provided in order to illustrate how a reader might break down this type of material. It should be noted that this description does not follow the organization provided in the text itself, but rather, represents the structures that a reader would use during encoding.

This type of text will be labelled a "defining exposition." The main purpose of the text is to provide the listener with new knowledge about the descriptive features of something, namely, a desert, and to explain how it affects all forms of life. First, a physical description is given by specifying the range of its generic features. For example, in DESERT, the desert is described as:

(1) a place without much water

(2) a place that has a hard and hilly landscape

(3) a place that can sometimes be sandy and flat

Then, specification is made of the consequences (to man, animals, and plants) of the generic features of a desert:

(1) a difficult place to live

(a) many plants will not grow

(b) people will sometimes die when they have no water

Third, description is provided of how one can prevent the occurrence of negative consequences to living things and enable the occurrence of positive states:

(1) pump water into the desert by pipelines or dig deep into the earth for a water source

(2) food can grow; men and plants can survive

Another section specifies neutral or positive consequences of the generic features of a desert by relating those instances where intrinsic factors of plants and animals enable them to survive without much water. Although negative consequences of an object use can be expected, there are instances where expected negative outcomes do not occur. For example, in this text we find that:

(1) certain plants do survive

(a) by growing roots far from stem and deep down into sand

(b) by saving water in their stems and leaves

(c) by having seeds lie in sand until each rain comes

(When the rain comes, the plants go from seed to flower to seed in about a week.)

(2) certain animals survive

(a) by a mechanism which enables them to save all the water they can

(b) by "knowing" how to find water, causing men to trust these animals when they are lost

(3) certain people survive

(a) by knowing where rain will fall

(b) by trusting certain animals' ability to find water

Thus, we can see that the information in the text, if reorganized, forms a coherent structure with four basic sections:

(1) Generic Characteristics of Object State

(2) Negative Consequences of Object State

(3) Preventative Actions against Negative Consequences

(4) Neutral or Positive Consequences

Although a particular organization has been imposed on this information, it is not intuitively clear that this sequence of events would guarantee the highest rate of comprehension. However, the above organization is amenable to empirical consideration.

If the structure of the desert text is analyzed according to this description, it is obvious that it contains many violations of the proposed structure.

The first paragraph contains one of the defining features of a desert (e.g., a place without water). It then states one of the negative consequences of the absence of water. Following this statement, an exception to the assumed negative consequences is given.

The remainder of the text is devoted to listing: the negative consequences, more defining features, preventive actions to neutralize the negative consequences, and instances of positive consequences. These various types of information are not grouped into any cohesive type of sequence. Therefore we would predict many types of reordering errors and omissions to occur in recall as a result of the text construction. In addition to the errors which should occur in the recall of the text, there may be incorrect inferences made about the text material, due to the poor organization of the text. Because there are virtually no studies completed in this area, our predictions will have to await further investigations.

B. Discourse Properties

1. Rhetorical Devices

In "The Wonderful Desert" we find several instances in which the author changes point of view. Much of the text is pure exposition, but there are places where the author uses rhetorical devices which create the appearance of an attempt to involve the reader actively in discussion.

These rhetorical devices are of two types. First, the author asks rhetorical questions. For example:

(1) What is a desert?

(2) How can this be?

In addition to making it easy to anticipate (by inference) what the topic or theme of the following material will be, this device is intended to make the prose it graces more vivid, by actively involving the reader, and making it sound to him as if he and the writer are thinking out the problems together.

A second device that the author of DESERT uses is that of addressing the reader direcly, e.g.:

> (2-3) You think at once of a place without water. You would think that the desert does not have enough rain for things to grow.
>
> (30-31) Do you think that all deserts are sandy and flat? Then you will be surprised.

In these cases, the writer's use of you think indicates his belief that this is a popular belief, and one which he assumes the as yet unenlightened reader probably holds. There is strong implication that this is a false belief, which is what the writer is about to show. In all cases, the direct reference to the reader is a not very subtle attempt to personalize the exposition, by involving the reader in it. Whether this has any effect on comprehension, either positive (e.g., motivational) or negative (e.g., by distracting the reader from the intended content) merits empirical research, as it has immediate implications for the writing and editing of texts.

C. Text-Connective Inferences

Legend

/ indicates an inference.

% indicates commentary on a required inference.

precedes paragraph numbers.

##PH1

1 What is a desert?

/1 It is not clear what the intended effect of this rhetorical question is. It is obviously not intended that the reader

produce an answer. The intent seems to be to provoke the reader to think about what deserts are like. Probably not properly classifiable as an indirect speech act of the usual sort.

2 You think at once of a place without water.

%2 (When considering the question posed in 1, namely you think of a place without water when thinking of what deserts are like.) [Text inference.]

3 You would think that the desert does not have enough rain for things to grow.

/3 Curious use of would here; gives away the author's intention to contradict that expectation.

4 Yet there is life in every desert.

5 Plants, plus animals and people live there.

6 How can this be?

%6 (This, i.e., 5, is something one would doubt, therefore surprising.) [Indirect speech act: conventionalized implicature.]

/6 Another rhetorical question; cf. sentence 1.

7 It is a wonderful story.

%7 (The answer to the question in 6 constitutes a wonderful story; probably works to imply that the story is about to be told.)

/7 Odd way of putting it, especially with the elliptical use of it.

##PH2

8 In the desert it may not rain for five years.

%8 (This sentence begins the wonderful story mentioned in 7.) [Text inference.]

9 Then one day a storm comes.

10 A heavy rain falls.

%10 (The rain is part of the storm in 9.)

11 All at once the desert is covered with green grass!

%11 (As an indirect consequence of the rain in 10; there was not grass before the rain.)

12 You can see many small flowers.

%12 (Whereas before the rain, you could see few or no flowers; you could see none before because there were none; you can see them now because now there are some; the existence of flowers now is an indirect consequence of the rain in 10.)

13 They grow very fast.

%13 ?(As an indirect consequence of the heavy rain.)?

14 In one week they go from seed to flower and back to seed.

%14 (As a concomitant of growing so fast.)

15 Then the seed lies in the sand, perhaps to wait another five years for rain.

%15 (Only perhaps, because the time of the next rain is unpredictable.)

##PH3

16 Desert plants try very hard to find water.

%16 (In order to stay alive; desert plants try harder than nondesert plants; because water is so scarce, they have to try harder to stay alive.)

17 Some plants send their roots far down into the sand.

%17 (As a way of trying very hard to find water in order to stay alive; there is more likely to be water far down in the sand than on the surface.)

18 Some plants send their roots far out from their stems.

%18 (As a way of trying very hard to find water in order to stay alive; this pattern of root growth is more likely to find water than other patterns.)

19 Other plants save water in their stems or leaves.

%19 (As a way of having enough water to stay alive during dry spells.)

/19 Notice the odd contrast here; in 19 it was stated that desert plants try to <u>find</u> water, then a couple of examples were given. Sentence 19 seems to be intended as a third example, but it is a case of an alternative to finding water--saving it--and hence, not really parallel to the other two examples. Notice the anthropomorphicization in this passage; intentions and goals of the plants are inferable at various points, from the use of <u>try</u> for example.

##PH4

20 Desert animals also save every drop of rain.

%20 (In order to survive in the desert, since without water they would die.)

/20 Notice the odd ellipsis in <u>save every drop of rain</u>; this cannot be literally true, it must be intended to mean "as much water as they can."

21 A camel stores water in its body.

%21 (In order to have water during dry spells in order to survive. A camel is a desert animal. This is an example case of the generalization in sentence 20.)

22 It stores enough water to last seven to nine days.

%22 (This is an elaboration on the previous sentence.)

23 A camel also knows how to find water.

%23 (As another way of having enough water to survive during dry spells.)

/23 What is the relevance of this? There is a transition here that is not easy to follow. The author has been talking about how animals save water, and has switched themes without notice.

24 A man lost in the desert knows his camel will help him.

%24 (His camel will help him [Deduction from factive verb] find water in order to survive. People need water to survive. This is an extent elaboration of the previous sentence.)

25 It will find a water hole.

%25 (There is water in water holes; therefore, it will find water. The man will go with the camel when it goes to find the water holes. Therefore, the man will find the water hole too.)

##PH5

26 Man, too, has learned to live with very little water.

%26 (X has learned to live with very little water [Deduction from <u>too</u>] in the desert, as a way of surviving, since otherwise a human would die. X=animals, or plants and animals,

or desert plants and animals, or camels; it is not clear which is intended.)

27 Some desert people seem to "know" where rain will fall.

%27 (Rain is water and can be drunk to survive. Not all desert people seem to know where rain will fall [Conversational implicature]. This sentence is an exemplifying elaborator of sentence 26.)

28 They race to the spot.

/28 Why race? From the next sentence we conclude that when they get there, they will have to wait for grass to spring up.

29 If they are lucky, rain falls and grass springs up.

/29 If they are not lucky, rain will not fall, and grass will not spring up.

30 They stay until their animals eat all the grass.

/30 That is, if rain has fallen and grass has sprung up. Their animals will eat all the grass. They came here so their animals could eat all the grass.

31 Then they move on.

/31 That is, after their animals have eaten all the grass.

##PH6

32 Do you think that all deserts are sandy and flat?

33 Then you will be surprised!

/33 Not all deserts are sandy and flat.

34 In most deserts the ground is hard and hilly.

/34 This is why you will be surprised.

%34 (Justification for inference in 33.)

##PH7

35 Today people often travel across the desert by car.

%35 What does this relate to?

36 But this may not be safe.

37 Water holes are sometimes 100 miles apart.

/37 Reason for 36: Having water holes 100 miles apart is a dangerous situation.

38 A man may die in about 14 hours if he has no water.

/38 Reason why 37 is a reason for 36: It is dangerous (not safe) because it could take more than 14 hours to go 100 miles and a man could die with no water in that time.

##PH8

39 The desert is a hard place in which to live.

/39 Consequence of 35-38?

40 Plants, animals, and people must have water.

%40 (No kidding! This has been an explicit assumption since sentence 3!)

/40 Reason for 39; assumes that there is not much water in the desert, something that has been assumed before, e.g., in 26, 37, and 38, but not asserted.

##PH9

41 Men have tried to bring water to the desert.

/41 Because they and their animals have to have it.

42 They have tried to get water by digging deep in the ground.

/42 This is one way they have tried.

43 From rivers they have brought water through pipes.

/43 This is another way.

44 Perhaps some day new and better ways to find water will be found.

/44 Apparently the two ways just described are not very effic'ent or cost-effective.

45 Then food to feed the hungry will grow in the desert.

/45 Because there will be enough water.

46 It will become a friendly place!

/46 Because food will grow there.

V. Analysis of the Layout of "The Wonderful Desert"

A. Illustrations, Graphics, Etc.

1. Pre-Text

The text is preceded on the same page by a title (large type), a color illustration of a couple of cacti on a patch of desert, and a table of "key words": desert, life, storm, stems, and camel.

2. Text

No illustrations or other graphics interrupt the text.

3. Post-Text

Text is followed at the bottom of the last page by a color illustration of an Arab on a camel, with three palm trees in the background.

B. Text Layout

Text is arranged in the usual block mode on the page, both margins justified. Paragraphs are indented four to five characters. Right-justified

lines contain from seven to eleven words, with most lines containing about ten. The one unillustrated page of text contains 23 lines. Type size is not very small; about 11 characters per inch.

C. Analysis of Sentences Containing Line Breaks

The sentences in this piece are longer than those in Babar Loses His Crown (possibly because the piece is aimed at older readers), and the right margins here are justified, whereas in the Babar story, only the left margins are justified. Probably because of the combination of these differences, there is a higher proportion of line-broken sentences here (58.69%) than in the Babar story (29.81%). Possibly for the same reason, the syntactic depth of line breaks is greater here (average depth of 2.55, as opposed to 1.17 for BABAR).

Legend

Unprefixed numbers refer to sentence numbers.

All syntactic category symbols are standard except: ApposNP, which means appostive NP, and X, which means X occurs in a direct quotation.

\+ symbolizes typographical end-of-line.

/ stands for run-on, i.e., the end of the sentence does not coincide with the end-of-line.

Depth n is the depth of structure (in nodes) at which end-of-line occurs.

Diff n is the analyst's impressionistic judgment of the difficulty of the end-of-line break, on a scale of one to seven, with seven indicating the most difficulty.

2. Analysis of Sentences Containing Line Breaks

2 [NP {V Adv {Prep {{Det + N} {PrepP}}}}] / (Depth 4; Diff 4)

3 [NP Aux {V {that {{Det + N} AUX {V {NP {Prep {NP {to + VP}}}}}}}}] / (Depth 4, 8; Diff 6, 5)

5 [{NP + NP {and NP}} VP] / (Depth 1; Diff 4)

13 [NP {V + Adv}] / (Depth 1; Diff 3)

14 [Adv {NP {V {{PrepP PrepP} + {and {PrepP}}}}}] / (Depth 3; Diff 1)

15 [S + Adv] (Depth 0; Diff 2)

17 [NP {V NP {Adv {Adv {Prep {Det + N}}}}}] / (Depth 5; Diff 3)

18 [NP {V NP {Adv {Adv {Prep + NP}}}}] / (Depth 4; Diff 4) Note similarity between 17 and 18.

19 [NP {V NP {Prep {Pron + NP}}}] (Depth 3; Diff 4)

22 [NP {V {{Adv + NP} {VP}}}] / (Depth 3; Diff 5)

23 [N Adv + VP] / (Depth 0; Diff 3)

24 [{NP {Ptcpl {Prep {Det + N}}}} VP] / (Depth 4; Diff 6)

25 [NP Aux + VP] (Depth 0; Diff 2)

26 [NP Adv Aux {V {V {Prep {{Adv Adj} + NP}}}}] / (Depth 4; Diff 1)

27 [NP {V {V {Conj + S}}}] / (Depth 3; Diff 2)

29 [{Conj {NP {Copula + Adj}}} S] / (Depth 3; Diff 4)

30 [NP {V Adv}] / (Depth 1; Diff 3) Or else, [NP V Adv] (Depth 0)

31 [Adv {NP + VP}] (Depth 1; Diff 5)

32 [Do NP {V {that {NP {Copula {Adj {and >> Adj}}}}}}] /
(Depth 6; Diff 3)

34 [Adv + S] (Depth 0; Diff 1)

35 [Adv {NP Adv {V Adv + Adv}}] / (Depth 2; Diff 1)

37 [NP + CopP] / (Depth 0; Diff 3)

38 [{NP Aux VP + Adv} {Conj S}] (Depth 1; Diff 3)

42 [S {Prep {V {Adv + {PrepP}}}}] / (Depth 3; Diff 3) Or else,
[NP Aux {V VP {Adv + {PrepP}}}] / (Depth 3; Diff 3) Or else,
[NP Aux {V {VP {Prep {V {Adv + {PrepP}}}}}}] (Depth 5)

43 [Adv {NP Aux {V + NP Adv}}] (Depth 2; Diff 4)

44 [Adv {NP {to + VP}} Aux VP] / (Depth 2; Diff 5)

45 [Adv {{NP {V {Det + N}}} Aux VP}] / (Depth 4; Diff 5)

46 [NP Aux {V {Det + NP}}] (Depth 2; Diff 4)

3. Line-End Analysis of Sentences Containing Quotations

There are no quotations in this text.

Appendix: Annotated Text of "The Wonderful Desert"

Legend

##	number marks the beginning of page with that number.
##PH	number marks the beginning of nth paragraph.
+	marks points where a line end occurs within a sentence.
/	marks run-on sentences; i.e., where the end of the sentence does not coincide with the end of the line.
>>	marks point where a page end occurs within a sentence.

##51
##PH1
1 What is a desert? /
2 You think at once of a + place without water. /
3 You would think that the + desert does not have enough rain for things to + grow.
4 Yet there is life in every desert. /
5 Plants, + animals and people live there. /
6 How can this be?
7 It is a wonderful story.
##PH2
8 In the desert it may not rain for five years.
9 Then one day a storm comes. /
10 A heavy rain falls.
##52
11 All at once the desert is covered with green grass!
12 You can see many small flowers. /
13 They grow + very fast. /
14 In one week they go from seed to flower + and back to seed. /
15 Then the seed lies in the sand, + perhaps to wait another five years for rain.
##PH3
16 Desert plants try very hard to find water.

17 Some plants send their roots far down into the + sand. /
18 Some plants send their roots far out from + their stems. /
19 Other plants save water in their + stems or leaves.
##PH4
20 Desert animals also save every drop of rain.
21 A camel stores water in its body. /
22 It stores enough + water to last seven to nine days. /
23 A camel also + knows how to find water. /
24 A man lost in the + desert knows his camel will help him. /
25 It will + find a water hole.
##PH5
26 Man, too, has learned to live with very little + water. /
27 Some desert people seem to "know" where + rain will fall. /
28 They race to the spot. /
29 If they are + lucky, rain falls and grass springs up. /
30 They stay + until their animals eat all the grass. /
31 Then they + move on.
##PH6
32 Do you think that all deserts are sandy and >> flat? /
##53
33 Then you will be surprised! /
34 In most deserts + the ground is hard and hilly.
##PH7
35 Today people often travel across the desert + by car. /
36 But this may not be safe. /
37 Water holes + are sometimes 100 miles apart. /
38 A man may die + in about 14 hours if he has no water.
##PH8
39 The desert is a hard place in which to live.
40 Plants, animals, and people must have water.
##PH9
41 Men have tried to bring water to the desert.
42 They have tried to get water by digging deep + in the ground. /

43 From rivers they have brought + water through pipes.

##PH10

44 Perhaps some day new and better ways to + find water will be found. /

45 Then food to feed the + hungry will grow in the desert. /

46 It will become a + friendly place!

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